



UAE Environment Ranks Highly in World Competitiveness Rankings

The UAE has returned impressive results in the most recent edition of the Institute for Management Development (IMD) World Competitiveness Yearbook for 2020. The Gulf nation came out top of the global pile in eight different environmental categories, including environmental laws, marine protected areas and sulphur dioxide (SO₂) emissions.

The news was announced by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) last month and reflects the hard work that the Emirati authorities have done in order to position the UAE as a global leader in terms of its approach to safeguarding the environment.

Elite in eight

MoCCA Minister Dr Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi broke the news in a speech in mid-August, highlighting the eight different areas in which the nation is deemed a world leader environmentally. In alphabetical order, the list of categories is as follows:

- Ecosystem Services
- Environmental laws
- Grasslands
- Household Solid Fuels
- Marine Protected Areas
- Satisfaction with Preservation Efforts
- Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂) Emissions
- Wetlands

“Protecting our environment, ensuring the sustainability of our natural resources, and conserving our biodiversity are among the strategic goals of the Ministry,” [explained Dr Al Nuaimi](#). “To address these priorities, the Ministry has implemented an integrated framework including in its scope environmental legislation, as well as projects and programmes that align with the highest international standards.”

Hard work pays off

The publication of the Index is recognition of the effort that has gone into environmental incentives in the country over the past 12 months. For example, the UAE has expanded the total territory that is protected from 15.07% in 2019 to



15.53% this year. 18.4% of its terrestrial landmass is now protected, with 12.01% of its marine waters (in 16 different areas) receiving the same privileges.

Elsewhere, the nation is promoting the growth of biodiversity through its grasslands and wetlands, while combustion of solid fuels in the domestic sphere has depreciated. This, in turn, has led to reduced SO2 emissions, while the public's satisfaction with the national preservation efforts are also at a global high.

A well-rounded performance

It wasn't just in environmental terms that the UAE excelled, either. In the overall World Competitiveness Index, the nation came in at a very respectable 9th, just ahead of the world's two biggest economies, the US and China (10th and 11th, respectively). In terms of nearby rivals, the UAE finished higher than any other Gulf Nation, with Qatar (14th) and Saudi Arabia (24th) the closest competitors.

Meanwhile, the UK returned a disappointing 19th place finish. The country's environmental performance has come under criticism of late, with Brexit potentially opening the door for laxer standards and opponents of the government casting doubt on whether [they really will build back greener](#) as they have promised.